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Message Text

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21-12
ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-15 DRC-01 ISO-00 SS-15 L-03 H-03 AID-20

HEW-08 CIAE-00 INR-10 JUSE-00 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SNM-02

SY-10 TRSE-00 USIA-15 NSC-10 SCI-06 OMB-01 AGR-20

/153 W
---------- 075108
P R 270655Z SEP 73
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5265
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
DEA WASHDC
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 6991

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: SNAR, AF, UN

SUBJ: NARCOTICS - AFGHANISTAN

REF: A) KABUL 6803 B) KABUL 6862 C) KABUL 6951 D) GENEVA 5129

1. ON SEPTEMBER 26, POLOFF AGAIN MET WITH ISMAIL OSMAN (UN OFFICIAL) WHO NOW SCHEDULED TO LEAVE KABUL FOR GENEVA ON FRIDAY, SEPT 28. OSMAN SAID THAT HIS PREVIOUS DEPARTURE DATE (SEPT 23) HAD BEEN DELAYED SO THAT HE COULD MAKE TWO-DAY TRIP TO ACHIN (NANGARHAR PROVINCE) TO SURVEY ECONOMIC AID NEEDS THAT AREA AND TO TALK TO OPIUM GROWING FARMERS ABOUT FUTURE GOA/UN-SPONSORED CROP SUBSTITUTION PLANS. ALTHOUGH FARMERS IN AREA VERY POOR AND AREA CURRENTLY LACKS ADEQUATE WATER RESOURCES FOR FUTURE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, OSMAN STATED THAT CROP SUBSTITUTION SCHEMES THERE ARE FEASIBLE IF SUFFICIENT AID PROVIDED AND THAT AREA WOULD NOT NEED MASSIVE AID INFLUX ON SCALE ENVISIONED FOR BADAKSHAN PROVINCE.

2. OSMAN THEN RECALLED OUR EARLIER CONVERSATION RE HELMAND VALLEY (REF A) AND STATED HE HAD REPORTED SUBSTANCE THAT
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CONVERSATION TO APPROPRIATE GOA OFFICIALS AT ALL LEVELS.

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OSMAN AGAIN EMPHASIZED DIFFICULTY OF PRESENT REGIME TAKING UNPOPULAR ACTION THIS AREA, I.E., COMPLETE BAN ON OPIUM PRODUCTION THIS FALL; BUT DID STATE THAT AT THIS TIME GOA WAS WILLING TO ACT IN HELMAND AREA THROUGH GREATER LAW ENFORCEMENT EFFORT. CURRENT GOA PLANS ARE NOT TO ENFORCE PRODUCTION BAN DIRECTLY ON FARMERS, BUT TO HIT KNOWN TRAFFICKERS AND CONTRABAND SMUGGLERS WHO BUY DIRECTLY FROM SMALL FARMERS IN AREA. OBJECT THIS APPROACH WOULD BE TO AVOID HITTING DIRECTLY FARMERS IN AREA (WHICH GOA RELUCTANT TO DO FOR VARIOUS POLITICAL REASONS); BUT TO CONCENTRATE ON BIG TRAFFICKERS WHO GAIN MOST OF PROFITS AND WHO ARE CURRENTLY TARGET OF NEW REGIME'S ANTI-CORRUPTION CAMPAIGN. WHILE OSMAN DID NOT STATE IT DIRECTLY, HE GAVE IMPRESSION THAT GOA, FOR VARIOUS INTERNAL POLITICAL REASONS, WANTS TO AVOID FULL SCALE ANTI-OPIUM PRODUCTION BAN IN HELMAND AREA UNTIL REGIME HAS HAD TIME TO CONCOLIDATE ITS POWER IN THAT AREA. NONETHELESS, GOA APPRECIATES US CONCERN RE HELMAND VALLEY AND THROUGH GREATER LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS, IS PREPARED TO TAKE WHATEVER LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS FEASIBLE AT THIS TIME TO CURTAIL NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING IN THAT AREA. OSMAN EMPHASIZED THAT THIS WAS ALL GOA (READ PRESIDENT DAUD) COULD REALISTICALLY DO FOR MOMENT AND THAT FURTHER USG PRESSURE FOR COMPLETE OPIUM PRODUCTION BAN IN HELMAND VALLEY MIGHT ADVERSELY AFFECT GOA'S WILLINGNESS TO PURSUE ITS PLANNED LAW ENFORCEMENT SCHEME IN HELMAND VALLEY AREA.

3. COMMENT: WHILE OSMAN IS A UN OFFICIAL AND HAS NO DIRECT PART IN GOA NARCOTICS POLICY-MAKING DECISIONS, HE APPEARS TO HAVE GOOD CONNECTIONS WITHIN GOA REGIME, INCLUDING PRESIDENT DAUD (HIS UNCLE). BELIEVE VIEWS EXPRESSED ABOVE ARE ACCURATE REFLECTION OF CURRENT GOA THINKING RE HELMAND VALLEY AND MIGHT HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO OSMAN FOR PASSAGE TO EMBASSY IN VIEW SEPTEMBER 19 DISCUSSION (REF A). NEVERTHELESS WE WILL CONTINUE TO EMPHASIZE NEED FOR POSITIVE GOA ACTION IN HELMAND AT ALL POSSIBLE LEVELS; BUT IT APPEARS THAT FOR NOW GOA ACTION WILL BE LIMITED TO LAW ENFORCEMENT (AS INDICATED REF B) AND THAT COMPLETE BAN ON OPIUM PRODUCTION IN HELMAND IS TOO SENSITIVE A POLITICAL ISSUE FOR GOA TO TACKLE AT THIS TIME.

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4. APPRECIATE REF D WHICH ARRIVED AFTER ABOVE PREPARED. HOPE GENEVA WILL HAVE OPPORTUNITY DEBRIEF OSMAN EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY THROUGH DAVIES AFTER HE RETURNS.
LEWIS

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